



RIDE-ALONG PROGRAM

FC No.: 1132

Date: 02-20-01

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I. Eligibility

- A. The following persons are eligible to participate in the Police Ride-Along Program:
 - 1. County residents 16 years of age and older in the district in which they reside. An unemancipated minor under the age of 18 must have the written consent of a parent or legal guardian to participate in the Ride-Along Program. ***An exception will be given to those persons participating in the Leadership Montgomery Program and those persons who have successfully completed the Citizen Academy. They will be permitted to ride at the district closest to their residence.***
 - 2. Visiting law enforcement personnel, department employees, and MCP Explorers
 - 3. A relative of an active or retired department employee.
 - 4. Professionals and students in the fields of Criminal Justice and the Social Sciences.
 - 5. Members of the news media and officials of the county government.
 - 6. County government employees in the district in which they are employed.
- B. Participation in this program is restricted to once every six months unless otherwise approved by the district/unit commander. Members of the department's Volunteer Services Unit are exempt from the six-month restriction at the discretion of the district/unit commander.

II. Administrative Procedures

- A. Ride-Along Application

Persons interested in the program must complete an MCP 146, "Ride-Along Application," in order to obtain the required approval to participate in the program. The original MCP 146 will be forwarded to the district/unit commander.
- B. Approval
 - 1. ***Criminal history and wanted checks will be conducted on adults and juveniles (for juveniles, contact Family Services Division for criminal history and Warrant Control Section for wanted checks), prior to the ride-along. Citizen Academy applicants are excluded, as this process will have been completed prior to their attendance with the Citizen Academy. Whenever it is determined that a ride-along applicant has a criminal history, the application will be forwarded to the district/unit commander for review. The district/unit commander will have the final authority to approve/deny the application. If approved, the host officer will be advised of the nature of the criminal history prior to the start of the ride-along.***
 - 2. Ride-along applications will not be approved unless the applicant presents valid identification. This identification will also be required prior to commencing the ride-along
- C. The ride-along officer should be notified by the officer's supervisor prior to the ride-along in order to afford the officer the opportunity to prepare for the assignment. The ride-along officer will receive, via the district/unit commander, a copy of the MCP 146, completely filled out.
- D. A visitor's badge will be issued to the participant and worn on the participant's outermost garment whenever the participant is inside of a police facility. (Refer to FC 306.A, "Department Security and Police Credentials.")
- E. ***Except as permitted by a collective bargaining agreement, any person, not a sworn Montgomery County police officer, is***

prohibited from attending any department roll call. Exceptions can be made on a case by case basis with authorization from the district/unit commander.

III. Briefing of the Ride-Along Participant

- A. Prior to the ride-along commencing, the host officer will review of the guidelines for ride-along participation with special emphasis on:
1. Safety equipment and procedures attendant to the police vehicle.
 2. The necessity and procedure relative to dropping off the ride-along participant when the police unit is required to respond to serious incidents which might present danger to the guest rider and the procedure to contact ECC in the event the officer is unable to return for the ride-along because of involvement at the incident scene. (Officers are encouraged to use tact and common sense in explaining this aspect so that the ride-along guest does not leave with the impression that the police are trying to hide something from the guest's view.)
 3. ***Prior to entering a private residence, officers will introduce the ride-along participant to the property owner or leaseholder. If the property owner or leaseholder does not permit the ride-along participant entry, the ride-along will wait for the host officer off the property.***
 4. The proper use of the police radio in the event the ride-along guest must use it.
 5. Holding all questions and comments concerning the manner in which a call is handled until completion of the immediate assignment so as not to compromise the officer.
- B. If desired, the officer will take the participant on a tour of the police facility.

IV. Operational Procedures

- A. Participation
Participation in the Ride-Along Program is generally available in units that have field

operational responsibilities within the Field Services Bureau or the Investigative Services Bureau.

B. Procedures

1. After approval, the district/unit commander will notify the shift sergeant who will assign the ride-along.
2. Officers will brief the participant in accordance with section III.A.
3. ***Law enforcement officers outside the state of Maryland and civilians who possess handgun permits will not be permitted to wear, carry, or transport a firearm while on the ride-along.***
4. At the conclusion of the ride, a debriefing session will be held by the participating officer with the guest to ensure that any questions regarding police work raised during the ride have been answered.
5. At the completion of the ride-along, the original copy of the MCP 146, completely filled out, will be filed at the unit level. The MCP 146 will be retained at the unit level for a minimum of one year after the ride-along, and purged from the unit files at the end of the calendar year following the year that the ride-a-long occurred (e.g., ride-along takes place 06-30-98, the file will be purged 12-31-99).
6. The Chief, Field Services Bureau, will ensure compliance with the procedures outlined in this directive.
7. ***The Supreme Court's decision in Wilson v. Layne (1999), states: "it is a violation of the Fourth Amendment for police to bring members of the media or other third person into a home during the execution of a warrant when the presence of the third parties in the home was not in aid of the execution of the warrant." If officers feel the media or a third party would be necessary in the execution of a search warrant, they will first obtain permission from the Chief of Police or designee.***

V. Ride-Along Time Periods

- A. Hours
Ride-along operations will take place on any day of the week between 0600-1200 and 1500-2300 hours. Changes to these hours may be

made at the district/unit commander's discretion.

A. Availability

Ride-alongs will be available year round except during periods of increased workloads or personnel shortages.

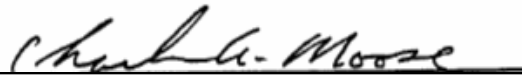
B. Scheduling Authority

District/unit commanders will have scheduling authority regarding ride-along participants within their units. Additionally, the district/unit commander may alter the hours of the ride-along or determine that during periods of personnel shortages the Ride-Along Program may be temporarily suspended.

VI. **Proponent Unit:** FSB Administration

VII. **Cancellation**

This directive cancels Function Code 1132, effective date 01-05-99.



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